



ASK US

Q AND A'S WITH ALEX & JANE - ALFRED HOSPITAL HTC TEAM

Living & Working in a time of COVID-19



Q. I have my annual review with the HTC coming up soon so what's happening now?

At the HTC since COVID-19 began having an impact on Victorians, the HTC has moved to using the telehealth system as much as possible to minimise the risk of exposure and to respond to the needs of our patient group and their families. However, if the medical scenario warrants a face-to-face clinical assessment, one will be requested. Please be assured we are taking all necessary precautions in face to face encounters with social distancing, minimising the amount of people present, hand sanitizer is available. Wearing of a face mask is now mandatory once outside of your home, so please do not take any unnecessary risks when commuting between home and the Alfred HTC. If you don't have the technology for telehealth we can telephone you. Please ensure the HTC has your correct contact details at all times.

Are you feeling unwell on the day of a face to face contact with the HTC? If you were coming in and have any cold/flu symptoms and/or you are waiting for COVID testing results, please do not come, call ahead and we can reschedule a non-urgent appointment. Get tested first at your GP or nearest testing site then self-isolate at home until you get your result please.

In an emergency situation and you are heading to the Alfred Emergency Department (ED) (or any hospital ED for that matter) you MUST tell ED about any cold type symptoms in addition to the bleed or injury. Due to the changing impact of COVID-19 we do not allow visitors and you should come alone (unless a carer is medically needed).

Q. What if I get stopped by the police or defence services doing spot checks on my way to the Alfred ED or the HTC for my face to face appointment?

We would suggest producing your ABDR card that confirms you are an Alfred patient and advise you are on the way to the ED to be seen due to your bleed. If you have telephoned the HTC in business hours and one of the HTC nurses or a doctor has requested you attend, please keep record of who you have spoken with. Your enquirer may want to verify with whoever you have spoken with.

If you have seen your GP and they have advised you to go to ED, please ask for a covering letter to the Alfred ED and produce this if stopped.

Q. I'm not sure if I should or want to go to work at the moment. Can I work from home? Do I need a medical letter as well?

Before we start, is your employer aware of your bleeding disorder?

Do you have any concerns about disclosure of this in the work place? Is your Superannuation Company aware of your pre-existing condition?

Having a bleeding disorder does not pose any exceptional risk of COVID-19 transmission!

If your job allows for working from home as many of us have commenced doing, (please seek your employers support first) you should be provided with the means to continue to carry out your employment at home as though you were in the work place. This means remote access to your work systems and records, providing the IT support and correct equipment in order to do so. Some employers are providing a small reimbursement for the additional cost of working from home such as internet access costs. Again query this with your employer.

For any of you with a compromised immune system or respiratory conditions, adhering to the rules of COVID-19 isolation is essential to your health care. We are especially happy to provide a letter supporting your request to work from home. If you are working in a non-essential industry or field, you may have been ordered to cease work. Please enquire what your entitlements are with your employer i.e. Annual leave.

Understand the symptoms

Has your employer enquired about JobKeeper? Have you applied for JobSeeker?

MINIMISING THE RISKS

It's also cold and flu season, have you had your flu injection or discussed it with the HTC.

1. Hand washing for 20 seconds with warm water and soap,
2. Using hand sanitizer responsibly (do you have any skin irritations?)
3. Minimising face touching
4. Face mask wearing – now mandatory!
5. Got a cough – remember to cough into the crease of your elbow NOT your hand and away from others around you
6. I personally am additionally mindful of touching surfaces in public such as a door knob, a press button, you can use some disposable barrier such as a tissue, some people wear disposable gloves or I use my pick up reacher stick! Especially handy in not having to bend over as we get older and greyer!

DO YOU HAVE ANY SYMPTOMS? CALL THE CORONA VIRUS



HOTLINE

As a reminder, if you are unwell in any way, you are advised to not attend the work place and should self-isolate for 14 days if you are awaiting test results.

What are the symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)?

	COVID-19	Colds	Flu
 Aches and pain	Sometimes	Rare	Common
 Cough	Common (usually dry)	Common	Common (usually dry)
 Diarrhoea	Rare	No	Sometimes (children)
 Fatigue	Sometimes	Sometimes	Common
 Fever	Common	Rare	Common
 Headache	Sometimes	Common	Common
 Runny or stuffy nose	Sometimes	Common	Sometimes
 Shortness of breath	Sometimes	No	No
 Sneezing	No	Common	No
 Sore throat	Sometimes	Common	Common

healthdirect

If you have any of the symptoms, however mild, you should seek advice and get tested. To get further advice, call the 24-hour coronavirus hotline 1800 675 398, your general practitioner or use our on-line self-assessment tool. <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-self-assessment>

The symptoms to watch out for are:

- Loss or changes in sense of smell or taste
- Fever
- Chills or sweats
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath
- Runny nose

In certain circumstances headache, muscle soreness, stuffy nose, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea may also be considered.

(source: <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-public-coronavirus-disease-covid-19>)

Useful links:-

<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-public-coronavirus-disease-covid-19>
<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/>
<https://www.pm.gov.au/media/jobkeeper-payment-and-income-support-extended>
<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/news/how-coronavirus-supplement-and-eligibility-some-income-support-payments-are-changing>

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